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| Observation field activity |
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| Lisa Lynch |
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Reflection of Observation

Having the opportunity to visit a class room and observe has been very rewarding. This opportunity gave me a chance to reflect on my career choice, identify in the classroom what I’ve been learning in class, look at the curriculum in action, and what a classroom looks like, identify the diversity and view the student/teacher relationship. This reflection will address the teacher’s understanding of a positive learning environment, the teacher understanding how students differ in learning, formal and informal assessments used to evaluate students, my impression of the classroom, what I would like to use in my classroom, anything I would like to change in environment observed, and evidence of parent involvement.

First, reflecting on the teacher’s understanding of group/individuals to use instruction, motivation, and behavior to create a positive learning environment. To begin with, the teacher used direct teaching to review and link material to new material, used the pedagogical cycle to keep student’s engaged. This allowed the teacher to use wait time and to verbally assess the student’s knowledge. Also, the teacher demonstrated cooperative learning by separating the students by reading levels into groups of no more than six. Additionally, the teacher would work with each individual group allowing a better understanding for the material as well as each other. Next, the teacher motivates the children by rewarding effort, completion, participation, and quite transitions. Students can receive gold tickets which the can redeem at the school store for merchandise. Then, students are constantly engaged in activities in the classroom. However, behavior can become an issue as the day wears on and students get tired. The teacher has a clip chart that ranks a students behavior from superstar to going to the office. The students are encouraged to have a positive environment by being respectful, responsible, and safe at all times. Concluding, the teacher was effective in demonstrating direct learning, cooperative learning, wait time, pedagogical cycle, reward system, and was clear about the expectations of good behavior to promote a positive environment.

Next, the classroom had students from at least four different ethnic groups, economically diverse students, and students will variable Multi- Intelligences. Some students participated in ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages). This program allows additional help in the classroom and/or test taking, such as having material read to them, use of dictionaries, and small group studies. Also, some students are not as economically well off as others and may require school breakfast or lunch. The teacher I was observing was made aware of by staff that a sibling of a student in her class told how they were not eating at home. As the result, that teacher and the other staff involved made an extra point that those students were eating breakfast and lunch in school. Additionally, students are encouraged to work together one on one, in small groups, or as a whole to complete projects, read books, and solve math problems. Summarizing, in the classroom I observed the teacher had students of different ethnicity, economic status, and multiple intelligences.

Also, the teacher I observed gave formal assessments. They were called B.C.R.’s. This allowed the teacher to assess the students writing skills. Additionally, the teacher used the pedagogical cycle to assess whether or not the students understood the information. Next, the teacher used exit tickets. These tickets were used just before lunch time. Three math problems are placed on the board and the students answer the problems on their tickets. Then, the student would raise their hand to have their answers check and the can now line up for lunch. Concluding, students can be assessed by writing skills, verbal skill, and problem solving skills.

Some things that impressed me about my classroom observation were how different it was from when I attended 4th grade. First, teachers are teaching a lot more information in what seems like a shorter period. After, an assessment the majority of students did not test well. As the result, the teacher went to bat for the student’s and was granted a retest with student’s being able to take home the old test to make corrections and use as a study guide. The teacher informed me the material will be evaluated on how it was taught and will be re-taught in a different manor. Next, the information that is being taught I don’t remember learning till middle school. Also, the teacher’s ability to have so much energy, keeping the students engaged in learning, and not losing any instructional time. Then, the use of technology was amazing. This class room could use instruction from a computer to an overhead projector that was placed in front of a white-board. Furthermore, I was impressed by teacher’s ability to maintain the energy needed to go through the lesson plan, not losing any instructional time, evaluating test results, and the use of technology in the classroom.

Observing the classroom, I was able to find some ideas that I’d like to use in my own classroom someday. First, I loved the technology and how the teacher utilized the computer with the white-board. Also, the 4th grade teacher’s work as a team to create lesson plans. This allows the teacher’s to create plans in their strong subjects and takes the pressure of creating all subjects.

However, if I were to change anything it would be the quick pace material is covered. I’m not sure till I try myself but I believe I lean more towards quality than quantity. Thou, I must remember that there are standards that must be meet and curriculums completed. Also, I would like to make the MSA important but try to keep the pressure off the students. While observing the 4th grade class I would like to use the technology and lesson planning strategy, while trying a more quality over quantity approach.

Furthermore, the teacher explained to me how communication between home/family takes place. First, if a student is absent that day the teacher if time permitting will call home to find out if student is ok. Second, the teacher has a file on each student that holds copies of all correspondence with parents. That’s used for future reference. Third, there are Thursday folders that students take home. This folder contains graded paperwork for the parents/family to observe. Lastly, the parents can request a meeting with the teacher anytime. This allows the parents to follow-up on their child’s performance. Concluding, the teacher communicated with home through phone calls, letters, Thursday folders, and being available for conferences.

Overall, this was a tremendous experience for me because it allowed me to take a hard look at what it is like in the public school system. The demands on students and teachers are high than I remember. Teacher’s, need to be able create a positive learning environment for all student’s even though their classrooms are diverse, while following a pre-determined curriculum that may include the MSA’s. Although, there is a lot of pressure on the student’s and teacher’s education can still be fun and exhilarating.